

Determinants of Brand Loyalty of Sports Footwear Brands in South Africa

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The sports footwear industry is an attractive market, especially with the Generation Y market segment. The purpose of this study is to establish the determinants of brand loyalty of sports footwear brands in South Africa. The study followed a descriptive research design and implemented a quantitative research method. Of the nine independent variables, six variables namely brand image, brand association, style, brand name, price and endorsement were found to have a statistically significant influence on Generation Y consumers' brand loyalty toward sports footwear, while three of the nine variables namely perceived quality, comfort and style, were not found to be statistically significant predictors of brand loyalty. It is important for manufacturers and marketers of sports footwear brands to understand which factors contribute to brand loyalty to their sports footwear brands as this will provide them with the insight to know what to feature in their product during the production stages and when they devise marketing strategies to the Generation Y cohort.

Keywords: brand, brand loyalty, footwear, sports marketing, South Africa

JEL Classification: M10

1. Introduction

The South African sports footwear market is estimated to be \$113 million, amounting to more than 1.6 trillion in South African (ZA) currency (Statista, 2022). Sports footwear marketers are fighting for a stake in the profitable sports footwear market in South Africa. The most dominating sportswear brands in South Africa include Puma, Nike, Adidas, Reebok, ASICS, Under Armour, Lacoste, Columbia, Decathlon, New Balance, SALOMON, Converse, The North Face, Umbro, FILA, Napapijri, Lotto, Brooks, Lululemon and Gymshark (GlobalData, 2022). Among these sports footwear brands, Nike has been at the top of the list brand. In addition, Nike was voted by South African youth as the coolest brand and was named the coolest sports footwear brand in 2021 (Bizcommunity, 2021).

The youth of South Africa is referred to as Generation Y or Gen Y in short. The Generation Y cohort is defined as individuals born between 1986 and 2005 (Market, 2004). These individuals are aged between 17 and 37 this year – 2022. This is the most educated group of all generational cohorts (Crampton and Hodge,

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Article History:

Received 29 June 2022 | Accepted 22 September 2022 | Available online 11 October 2022

Cite Reference:

Shezi, N.E. and Redda, E.H., 2022. Determinants of Brand Loyalty of Sports Footwear Brands in South Africa. *Expert Journal of Marketing*, 10(2), pp.99-109.

2009). In addition, the majority of them are university students still pursuing university qualifications and others are graduates and working. Such characteristics make the Generation Y market more attractive to sports footwear marketers in South Africa.

According to Stats SA (2021), Generation Y is made up of about 42% of the population of South Africa. Such a statistic report is making the Generation Y market segment a more valuable segment in South Africa. These individuals are of particular interest to marketers given that a tertiary qualification is associated with a higher earning of income (Bevan-Dye, 2012). Generation Y consumers are also characterised as heavy spenders on fashion clothes. Certainly, South African students spend more money than the average South African (Bizcommunity, 2019). Therefore, it is important to understand which factors influence Generation Y university students' brand loyalty toward sports footwear brands.

The term brand loyalty refers to a consumer's persistence in buying a specific brand (Lues and De Klerk, 2017). Brand loyalty is defined as consumers' commitment to purchasing their favourite brands and repeated purchases over time (Ronaldo and Atik, 2015). In other words, consumers continue to purchase the very same brand within a specific product category (Ramiz et al., 2014). For example, a consumer may continue purchasing AIR MAX sneakers under the Nike brand category. Similarly, many loyal consumers of Jordan sneakers wait in line to buy the newly released Air Jordan sneakers and sometimes the product goes out of stock hours after launching it (Ronaldo and Atik, 2015). These consumer actions could lead to greater market share when they keep buying the same brand (Yeap et al., 2018). Thereafter, the sales are maximised and the company is generating a greater profit (Almeida et al., 2018; Lodjo and Tumewu, 2015). Brand loyalty is important for a business as it keeps the brand name in the mind of consumers and discourages them to switch to other brands (Zainal and Mahmud, 2021). Thus, differentiating a brand from major competitors (Ramiz et al., 2014; Iqbal et al., 2013).

There are several studies (Iqbal, 2013; Samsita and Suki, 2015; Ronaldo and Atik, 2015; Ruixia and Chen, 2019; Sage, 2009; Beneke et al., 2015; Anitha, 2014; Pa et al., 2021; Lim and Aprianingsih, 2015; Meenakshi and Savithri, 2015; Dai and Chen, 2017; Anitha, 2014; Kinuthia, 2012; Gupta et al., 2020) found in the literature presenting many factors as determinants of brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands such as brand image; perceived quality; brand association; style; comfort; colour; brand name; price; and endorsement.

As such, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the determinants of brand loyalty of sports footwear brands among the Generation Y cohort in South Africa.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Brand Image

Brand image is defined as the perception reflected by the various associations that live in the memory of consumers about the brand leading to consumer preferences towards a specific brand (Wijaya, 2013). Brand associations consist of attributes, benefits and attitudes. Attributes are grouped into product-related and non-product-related attributes. Product-related attributes are ingredients necessary to deliver the product functionality as expected by consumers (Keller, 1993). In other words, product-related attributes are features that make the product work or function (Wijaya, 2013). In contrast, Keller (1993) referred to non-product related as the external components related to the product that have abilities to influence purchasing decisions among consumers. For example, price, endorsements, and colour can be regarded as non-product-related attributes. Benefits are what consumers believe the product will do for them after purchasing it in the form of functional, experiential and symbolic benefits (Keller, 1993). A consumer may purchase sneakers of the Nike brand because of the symbolic benefits fulfilment. Attitude is described as an overall evaluation of a brand, the certain beliefs that consumers have about a brand, and evaluative judgements based on the beliefs (Wijaya, 2013). Attitude can be negative or positive. For example, an individual who enjoys playing basketball might purchase Jordan sneakers by Nike because he believes that Jordan is good for playing basketball.

Brand image plays a key role in making buying decisions because consumer memory about the brand affects whether the consumer will buy a product or not (Puška et al., 2018). Marketers must strive to ensure a good reputation for a company that will contribute to a good brand image; thereafter, they must encourage consumers to purchase the product. Big brands in the sports market such as Adidas and Nike are trying to build a strong brand image to become the best sports brand (Ronaldo and Atik, 2015). Wijaya (2013) emphasised

that brand image is formed by a representation of perceptions and is the foundation for the decision to purchase a product, resulting in brand loyalty. Similarly, the study by Ruixia and Chen (2019) proved that brand image is the most influential element motivating brand loyalty. In keeping with the above argument, the following hypothesis is postulated:

H1: Brand image positively influences consumer brand loyalty toward sports footwear brands.

2.2 Perceived Quality

Perceived quality refers to individual perceptions or views about the quality of a product (Iqbal, 2013). In other words, perceived quality is the subjective judgement of product quality from consumers. Parmar (2014) highlighted the fact that the sale of the product relies heavily on its quality as a consumer can quickly reject the poor quality product and switch to another product. Anitha (2014) suggested that marketers must maintain product attributes by conducting audits more frequently and replacing relevant stock. According to Iqbal (2013), consumers judge products based on the performance of the products.

Literature indicates that the quality of products plays a major role in influencing the success of the businesses (Meenakshi and Savithri, 2015). In the footwear industry, appearance and other tangible features are necessary because the material that is used in making a product is considered an important element for product quality (Iqbal et al., 2013). Manufacturers of sports footwear must ensure that quality is incorporated in their products as this may encourage brand loyalty among consumers. Balakrishnan and Selvanathan (2015) indicated that the quality of the product does influence brand loyalty. Correspondingly, the study of Iqbal (2013) revealed that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty, which influences consumers to be brand loyal. In line with the above-mentioned narrative, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Perceived quality positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands.

2.3 Brand Associations

Aaker (1991) defined brand association as anything linked to a brand. Brand association is specific things that deserve and are always associated with a product, can arise from a unique offering of a product, repeated and consistent activities such as sponsorship or social responsibility activities, issues that are very strongly related to a person, owner, and certain symbols and meanings that are very strongly related and attached to a brand (Wijaya, 2013). According to Keller (1993), association can be categorised as benefits, attitudes and attributes. Marketers can link a brand with certain attributes such as the spokesperson or logo of the brand (Lu and Xu, 2015). For example, marketers of sports footwear can link famous athletes to their brands such as Usain Bolt.

According to Falahat (2018), brand association contributes to the consumers' value perception and gives them a reason for purchasing a product under the brand. Marketers of sports footwear should try by all means to incorporate enough association towards their brands. Sasmita and Suki (2015) emphasised that the higher the product association, the more the brand will be remembered by consumers and be loyal towards the brand. In line with the literature reviewed, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Brand associations positively influence consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands.

2.4 Style

Style refers to the visual appearance of a product – this includes design or colour that will influence consumer perceptions about the product (Frings, 2005). Kinuthia, et al. (2012) emphasised that consumers gain more satisfaction by wearing the latest fashion styles that lead to the enhancement of their self-esteem. Fashions are constantly changing over a period of time and consumers purchase the current products trending (Anoosh, 2020). Sports footwear markets must move with the times and offer products relevant to the market. As such, the footwear industry will be monitored to improve product style. Moreover, there should be enough stock of current product styles available for sale to consumers (Anitha, 2014).

A product style that appeals greatly to the consumer will create a relational affiliation between the customer and the brand (Lai and Teo, 2019). Such a relationship could result in brand loyalty. According to

Kinuthia (2012), product style is influencing brand loyalty and the results from the study of Ronaldo and Atik (2015) supported this theory, indicating that product style is an important factor influencing brand loyalty. Similarly, the study by Ruixia and Chen (2019) confirmed that product style positively influences brand loyalty to sports footwear. In line with the literature reviewed, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H4: Style positively influences consumer brand loyalty toward sports footwear brands.

2.5 Comfort

Product comfort is defined as product relief while using the product. The comfort of the product plays a vital role to consumers and is the most influential when purchasing sports footwear (Yoh et al., 2016). According to Yeo (2020), consumers are willing to buy sports footwear with comfort and light weight.

Footwear has become a popular category among the youth as it is seen as a self-identification tool that helps consumers to distinguish themselves from the masses with a product giving more comfort (Amatya, 2018). Sports footwear manufacturers should test the comfort of their products by testing product concepts before starting with mass production. This will ensure that consumers are comfortable with the product. In addition, when sports footwear companies advertise their products in mass media, they should demonstrate that their products are durable and comfortable (Yoh et al., 2016). Brand comfort can lead to brand loyalty (Sage, 2009). In line with the literature reviewed, the following hypothesis is postulated:

H5: Comfort positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands.

2.6 Colour

Colour is defined as the wavelengths of light in the visual spectrum that are detected by the human retina (Sant'Anna et al., 2013). Colours influence consumer reactions faster than words (Hosea, 2017). Colour is a very powerful tool to enhance visibility and communication with consumers, even if the brand name is visible enough (Beneke et al., 2015). Consumers relate to a product through colour and could select or reject the product because of the colour (Kinuthia, 2012). Beneke et al. (2015) emphasised that colour has different meanings in a cultural context. For example, in some countries red is associated with something opposing danger, while in other countries it is associated with love. As such, marketers of sports footwear are advised to consider the associations between packaging colour and consumer response (Beneke et al., 2015).

According to Mahmud and Gope (2012), colour is the most important factor of a product that affects brand loyalty. Beneke et al. (2015) highlighted that brand loyalty may be affected if there are changes to the colour. To avoid such problems, marketers need to consult consumers and consider their opinions if the company is planning to change the colour. A change in product colour may result in a change in consumer loyalty. Singh (2016) emphasised that there is a strong relationship between colour and brand loyalty. In line with the literature reviewed, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H6: Colour positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands.

2.7 Brand Name

Brand name is defined as the term given to a brand, such as Nike, Puma and Adidas. The brand name do not necessarily describe the functionality of the brand. For example, Red Bull is a company manufacturing and selling soft drinks and not bulls. Brand name is essential to group the association of a product and the consumer together (Rehaman et al., 2012). It is important to have a brand name that can be easily pronounced and memorised by consumers. In addition, a brand must have a good reputation. Consumers prefer a brand name with a good reputation (Lim and Aprianingsih, 2015). Therefore, a brand name creates awareness and plays a significant role in consumer decision making (Meenakshi and Savithri, 2015).

According to Anoosh (2020), a brand name distinguishes a product from its major competitors and affects brand loyalty (Rehaman et al., 2012) Similarly, a few studies (Anitha, 2014; Pa et al., 2021; Lim and Aprianingsih, 2015; Meenakshi and Savithri, 2015; Dai and Chen, 2017) investigated the effect of the brand name to brand loyalty and confirmed that the brand name positively influences brand loyalty. In line with the literature reviewed, the following hypothesis is stated:

H7: Brand name positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands.

2.8. Price

Price is the amount of money a consumer pays for product ownership (Anoosh, 2020). Price is defined as the exchange process of goods from the owner for the value of money from the buyer. Consumers select particular footwear brands based on the price tag (Meenakshi and Savithri, 2015). This is how companies generate their source of income. Companies must not overprice products as the price can force consumers to search for other products and switch brands (Parmar, 2014). In contrast, consumers are willing to pay more for products presenting good quality. The willingness from consumers to pay a higher price for a product is motivated by their loyalty to the brand.

Consumers with strong brand loyalty are not price sensitive when the price changes (Anitha, 2014; Kinuthia, 2012). These consumers are ready to pay extra for their favourite product and the price will not affect their intentions to buy (Lim and Aprianingsih, 2015). The literature presents many studies (Anitha, 2014; Lim and Aprianingsih, 2015; Kinuthia, 2012) that investigated the effect of price on brand loyalty. The findings of the studies showed that price is an important factor contributing to brand loyalty. In line with the literature reviewed, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H8: Price positively influences consumer brand loyalty toward sports footwear brands.

2.9. Endorsement

Endorsement includes well-known celebrities. These celebrities agree to appear with a product in an advertisement. A celebrity can appear in an advertisement using a brand of a manufacturer or give a testimonial about the brand and recommend consumers to buy it (Ndlela and Chuchu, 2016). In most cases, sports stars are used as endorsers. Sports stars are favoured and appreciated by the consumers as their daily lives motivate their fans (Kim et al., 2020). For example, the world-known athlete Usian Bolt endorsed Puma for many years (Augusta Free Press, 2020). Such endorsements are used to make a brand stand out among its competitors (Sharma and Kumar, 2013).

The importance of celebrity endorsement is to assist in building brand loyalty (Gupta et al., 2020). These individuals use their fame to spread the brand name with the hope of building brand loyalty. However, a celebrity may not be an expert in product endorsing. Correspondingly, some studies (Ndlela and Chuchu, 2016; Chaudhary and Asthana, 2015) revealed that celebrity endorsers do not always influence brand loyalty. However, based on the theoretical reasoning stated above, this study is postulating a positive hypothesis as follows:

H9: Endorsement positively influences consumer brand loyalty toward sports footwear brands.

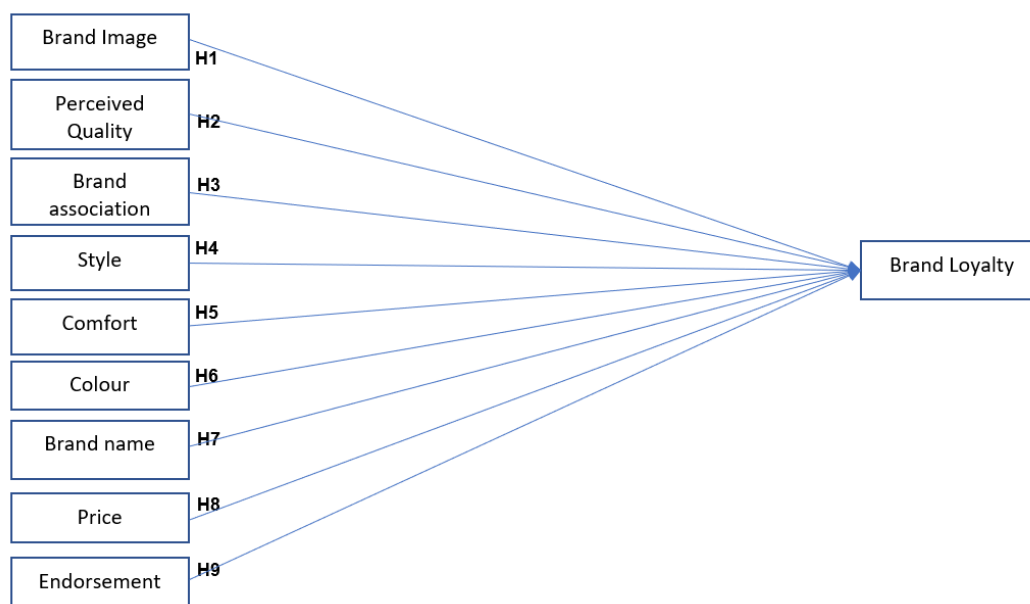


Figure 1: Hypothesised research model

As elucidated in the literature review above, sports footwear is an attractive market especially for the Generation Y market segment. The purpose of this study is, therefore, to investigate the determinants of brand loyalty of sports footwear brands in South Africa in order to empower the manufacturers and marketers of sports footwear, giving insight with regard to the important factors that contribute to sports footwear brand loyalty for effective marketing.

3. Methodology

The study implemented a descriptive research design and quantitative research method to achieve its objectives.

A self-administrated questionnaire was used to collect the required data to achieve the objectives of the study. The questionnaire had two sections, namely section A and section B. Section A included the demographic information of the participants, while section B included questions measuring antecedents of brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands. The measurement scale in the questionnaire had nine constructs (brand image, perceived quality, brand association, style, comfort, colour, brand name, price and endorsement). Participants rated each construct using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from one to seven (1 = strong disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

The study adopted a non-probability and convenience sampling technique. A total of 387 people participated in the study, which is sufficient for the type of analysis conducted in this study to achieve its objectives. The participants of the study were Generation Y students enrolled at one university of technology and as well as a traditional university in the Free State and Gauteng Province of South Africa. The participants' ages ranged from 18 and 25 years. Of the 387 participants, four did not indicate their gender. The distribution was almost equal between both genders; there were slightly more males (N=193; 50.04%) than females (N=190; 49.06%) (see Table 1).

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of Scales

More males than females participated in this study. All mean values of the nine constructs were above 3.5 suggesting general importance of the variables in predicting sports footwear brands. The top five sports footwear brands popular among Generation Y university students are Nike, Adidas, Puma, Kappa and Asics. Cronbach alphas were calculated for each construct measuring antecedents of brand loyalty toward sports footwear brands. All values of Cronbach alphas were above 0,6 (Malhotra, 2010) and ranged between 0.62 to 0.80 providing evidence of internal-consistency reliability of the scales used in the study.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and reliability of scales

Reliability	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	Standard deviation	Favourite brands	Frequency (%)
Brand image	4	0.79	4.93	1.38	Nike	238 (61.5%)
Brand association	5	0.80	5.75	1.03	Adidas	211 (54.5%)
Perceived quality	4	0.80	6.10	0.84	Puma	58 (15.2%)
Style	3	0.76	5.96	0.90	Kappa	23 (5.9%)
Comfort	2	0.65	6.35	0.88	Asics	12 (3.1%)
Colour	3	0.66	5.77	1.10	Umbro	5 (1.3)
Brand name	3	0.63	5.28	1.15	Other	34 (8.8%)
Price	3	0.62	5.26	1.20	Gender	
Endorsement	2	0.72	4.16	1.69	Male	193 (50.4%)
Brand loyalty	4	0.77	5.14	1.24	Female	190(49.6%)

4.2 Correlation Analysis

As reported in the correlation matrix table (Table 2), a positive relationship between each pair of the variables tested in this study is observed providing support for the nomological validity of the measurement

theory (Hair et al., 2010; Malhotra, 2010). The multicollinearity is absent as none of the coefficients was above the 0.90 thresholds.

Table 2: Correlation matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Brand image (1)	1									
Brand association (2)	.633**	1								
Perceived quality (3)	.428**	.597**	1							
Style (4)	.418**	.548**	.588**	1						
Comfort (5)	.382**	.466**	.537**	.465**	1					
Colour (6)	.385**	.508**	.375**	.420**	.465**	1				
Brand name (7)	.572**	.515**	.427**	.415**	.331**	.523**	1			
Price (8)	.216**	.251**	.214**	.233**	.171**	.161**	.227**	1		
Endorsement (9)	.314**	.259**	.124*	.192**	.022	.216**	.332**	.179**	1	
Brand loyalty (10)	.552**	.591**	.467**	.474**	.353**	.438**	.572**	.116*	.339**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.3 Multivariate Regression Analysis

The results of the multivariate regression analysis and collinearity statistics are reported in Table 4. The collinearity statistics reported in Table 4 indicate the absence of a collinearity issue as the tolerance values were above the cut-off level 0.10 and the variance inflation factor of the variables was below the cut-off level of 10.00 (Pallant, 2010). Having ascertained the absence of the collinearity issue, a multivariate regression analysis was conducted to determine and model the antecedents of brand loyalty to sports footwear brands in South Africa.

Nine predictors (factors) namely endorsement, comfort, price, brand name, style, colour, brand image, perceived quality and brand association were entered as independent variables and brand loyalty as the dependent variable. As reported in Table 3, the F-ratio (42.178) was significant at $p < 0.01$, inferring the suitability of the model in predicting Generation Y brand loyalty towards sports footwear. The six independent variables which were found to have a statistically significant influence explain approximately 50 per cent of the variance in Generation Y consumers' brand loyalty toward sports footwear, as indicated by the R^2 value.

Table 3: Regression model summary – Anova results

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate	F	Sig.
1	.708 ^a	0.502	0.490	0.88499	42.178	.000 ^b

a. Predictors: (constant), endorsement, comfort, price, B. name, style, colour, B. image, perceived quality, B. association

As reflected in Table 4, six of the nine factors, namely brand image, brand association, style, brand name, price and endorsement were found to have a statistically significant influence on brand loyalty and therefore H1, H2, H4, H7, H8 and H9 are supported. These results are in line with some empirical studies found in the literature. H1 formulated as brand image positively influences consumer brand loyalty toward sports footwear brands is in support of a previous study conducted by Ruixia and Chen (2019), which claimed that brand image does influence brand loyalty. H2 stated as perceived quality positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands corroborates the study of Iqbal (2013) ascertaining the positive effect of perceived quality on brand loyalty of sports footwear brands among consumers. H4 postulated as style positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands is confirmed and supported by past studies (Ronaldo and Atik, 2015; Lai and Teo, 2019).

H7 postulated as brand name positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands is confirmed and finds support in literature (Anitha, 2014; Pa et al., 2021; Lim and Aprianingsih, 2015; Meenakshi and Savithri, 2015; Dai and Chen, 2017), which confirmed the positive influence of the brand name on brand loyalty. Similarly, H8 stated as price positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands is also supported and corroborates previous findings (Anitha, 2014; Lim and Aprianingsih, 2015; Kinuthia, 2012), which showed that price contributed to brand loyalty. Lastly, H9 formulated as endorsement positively influences consumer brand loyalty towards sports footwear brands is

confirmed in this study, however it does contradict previous studies (Ndlela and Chuchu, 2016; Chaudhary and Asthana, 2015), which found that endorsement is not a predictor of brand loyalty.

As reported in Table 4, three of the nine factors – perceived quality, comfort and style – were not found to be statistically significant predictors of brand loyalty, and therefore H3, H5 and H6 are rejected. These results are opposing some literature studies. For example, H3: Brand association, has different results from the study by Sasmita and Suki (2015), where brand association increases brand loyalty; H5: Comfort, is varying from the study by Sage (2009), where comfort leads to brand loyalty; and H6: Colour, is opposing the study by Singh (2016), who found that colour creates a strong relationship leading to brand loyalty.

Table 4: Beta coefficients, hypothesis testing and collinearity statistics

	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.	Hypothesis testing result	Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. error	Beta				Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-0.340	0.411		-0.827	0.409			
Brand image	0.132	0.046	0.147	2.861	0.004	H1: Supported	0.499	2.002
Brand association	0.273	0.068	0.227	4.000	0.000	H2: Supported	0.412	2.426
Perceived quality	0.122	0.076	0.083	1.595	0.112	H3: Rejected	0.491	2.037
Style	0.161	0.067	0.117	2.401	0.017	H4: Supported	0.558	1.792
Comfort	0.009	0.066	0.007	0.139	0.889	H5: Rejected	0.591	1.693
Colour	0.050	0.053	0.044	0.930	0.353	H6: Rejected	0.586	1.707
Brand name	0.262	0.054	0.243	4.856	0.000	H7: Supported	0.528	1.895
Price	-0.108	0.040	-0.104	-2.725	0.007	H8: Supported	0.904	1.107
Endorsement	0.095	0.029	0.129	3.236	0.001	H9: Supported	0.825	1.211

a. Dependent variable: Loyalty

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Brand loyalty is a vital topic for marketers to understand consumer behaviour in the market. As such, marketers are curious to know which factors determine the brand loyalty of their customers towards their products. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to investigate the determinants of brand loyalty of sports footwear brands in South Africa in order to empower the manufacturers and marketers of sports footwear with insight concerning the important factors that contribute to sports footwear brand loyalty for effective marketing.

Six factors, namely brand image, brand association, style, brand name, price and endorsement, were found to have a statistically significant influence on sports footwear brands. These results suggested that Generation Y university students are loyal to sports footwear brands because of these six factors. In contrast, three factors, namely perceived quality, comfort and colour, were not found to be statistically significant. As such and based on the findings of this study, these three factors should not be regarded as predictors of brand loyalty of sports footwear brands among Generation Y university students. More studies need to be undertaken before a conclusive decision is made with regard to these three factors.

It is important for the manufacturers and marketers of sports footwear brands to understand which factors contribute to brand loyalty as this will provide them with the insight to know what to feature in their product during the production stages and how to adapt their marketing strategies to the Generation Y cohort. For example, manufacturers of sports footwear brands may need to ensure that they are on par with current fashion style trends within the youth market and produce current styles matching the preferences of youth consumers as the targeted group. In addition, marketers of sports footwear brands may need to identify and select a celebrity that is heavily followed by youth as the endorser of their sports footwear brand. Such actions will be beneficial for marketers to plan, develop and implement successful marketing campaigns aimed at the

Generation Y cohort, given that Generation Y is the largest consumer group within the South African population. In addition, the Generation Y market is the most educated group of consumers – more than any other generation. A such, Generation Y consumers are earning better salaries and their spending appetite is stronger than any other consumer group in South Africa.

Author Contributions: Nkosinamandla Erasmus Shezi1 and Ephrem Habtemichael Redda2: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review and Editing, Visualization.

Acknowledgements: The authors acknowledge all the supports received from participants and colleagues.

Funding: There was no external funding received for this research.

Conflicts of Interest: None.

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